

## Michigan Educational Assessment Program Graduating Class of 2001

- The percentage of students in the graduating class of 2001 that “Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards” increased on the Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Writing. The most significant improvement occurred in Writing. Student performance also improved somewhat in Social Studies, the only test not considered in the Merit Award.
- Students first take the MEAP High School tests in the spring (April/May) of their junior year. The tests were developed to measure what students should know and be able to do by the end of the tenth-grade. With the exception of Social Studies, the tests are aligned with the Model Core Curriculum, which was approved by the State Board of Education in 1990. The Social Studies test is aligned with the Michigan Curriculum Framework, which was approved by the State Board of Education in 1995, and reflects higher expectations. This spring, students will take newly developed mathematics and science high school tests that will also reflect higher expectations and will be aligned with the Michigan Curriculum Framework.
- Because the high school tests are used for transcript endorsements and serve as the primary means to qualify for the Michigan Merit Award, students have at least two opportunities to retest – in the fall and again in the spring of the senior year. The results being released are for the graduating class of 2001 and reflect the highest scores a student has attained. Some students may have taken the test three times, others only once.
- The *Social Studies* test appears to be the most difficult test for students. Because the Social Studies tests are the first of the MEAP tests to be aligned with the Michigan Curriculum Framework, it is likely that many schools have yet to fully align their social studies curriculum and instruction with the Michigan Curriculum Framework. Of the class of 2001 public school students taking the Social Studies high school test, 26.6% “Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards.” There has been some improvement when the class of 2001 is compared with the class of 2000, in which 24.1% “Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards.” The Social Studies test has been designed to measure a student’s knowledge of history, geography, economics and civics. There is also a decision making and inquiry component that requires a student to take a stand on an issue presented, and to support that stand or viewpoint using prior knowledge, data presented in the question, apply a core democratic value that supports the position taken, and refute an argument that would support an opponent’s position on the issue.

- The *Writing* test is the second most difficult test for students. The writing test asks students to reflect and report on their own writing (in response to a specific question), and requires students to write an extended response to a given topic. Of this year's graduating class, 68.5% "Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards" and only 9.6% scored below the basic level. Scores have improved, 14.1% of last year's graduating class scored below the basic level and 58.4% "Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards."
- Of the students in the Class of 2001 students taking the *Science* test, 60% "Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards" compared with 56% last year. Also, fewer students scored below the basic level (17.5%) as compared with last year's graduating class (19.5%). The science test was developed to measure scientific literacy – using earth, life and physical science, as well as the ability to construct and construct scientific knowledge.
- The *Mathematics* test requires students to apply mathematical concepts in the areas of numbers, geometry, statistics and probability, and measurement. A higher percentage of students (68.4%) "Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards" compared with 64.8% last year. A smaller percentage of students were below the basic level (16.2%) this year compared with last (19.5%). Almost the same percentage of students scored at the basic level this year and last year, 15.4% and 15.7%, respectively.
- The *Reading* test measures reading comprehension within a reading selection and across one or more reading selections. In addition, students read a short real-life scenario related to the reading selections, take a position in response to the scenario, and using information from all of the reading selections, write a response that supports their position. Seventy four percent (74.2%) of students taking the Reading test in the class of 2001 "Exceeded or Met Michigan Standards" compared with 69.4% of students in the class of 2000. A smaller percentage of students (14.8%) scored below the basic level this year compared with last year (17.5%).